UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
1st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 18 September 1990
at 5.15 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Temporary Chairman: Mr. DE MARCO (President of the General Assembly)

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ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/45/SR.1
20 September 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

90-55951 2578S (E)

The meeting was called to order at 5.15 p.m.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

1. Mr. GAETAN (Burkina Faso) nominated Mr. Somavia (Chile).

2. In the absence of further nominations and in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure, the TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN declared Mr. Somavia (Chile) elected by acclamation.

3. Mr. Somavia (Chile) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
2nd meeting
held on
Monday, 24 September 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/45/SR.2
1 October 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

90-56005 2601S (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the euphoria and hope aroused by the end of the cold war and the advent of a new era of co-operation between the great Powers in the field of peace and security, together with the growing awareness of individual liberties and of the market economy as the principal form of production, were causing people to forget the tragic conditions in which the populations of many developing countries lived and the fact that there were currently more poor and unemployed people in the world than there had been 20 years previously. In pursuit of the three principal aims set by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization (A/45/1) and in accordance with its mission to keep the human being at the centre of its attention, the Third Committee had the duty to focus on the growing rift between rich and poor, between men and women, between youth and adults and between North and South. As the world was paying increasing heed to the United Nations, the Committee should set an example by turning to good effect both the differences which separated human beings and the merits which they all had in common. It should also stress the importance of the material and spiritual well-being of every human being, however secondary that concern might seem in the face of the crisis which had erupted in the Persian Gulf, at a time when the very destiny of the Organization and the nature of the nascent social order were being shaped. The Committee had a role to play in the Gulf crisis, too, by concerning itself with those aspects of the situation falling within its competence, such as migration, the refugee problem and humanitarian aid, but it should not allow the violations of the Charter perpetrated in that region to obscure its view. It should therefore take up the message to be conveyed by the many heads of State who would be attending, at the height of the Gulf crisis, the World Summit for Children. The World Summit would be a historic event, as never before had so many high-level representatives gathered together to study a social problem, namely, that of children, and, by extension, of their families and the national and international social environment in which they lived.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2. Mrs. SHERMAN-PETER (Bahamas) nominated Miss Zindoga (Zimbabwe) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

3. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) nominated Ms. Coombs (New Zealand) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

4. Miss Zindoga (Zimbabwe) and Ms. Coombs were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

5. The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur would be elected at a subsequent meeting.

STATEMENT BY THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

6. Mr. AHMED (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs) said that the past decade had seen unprecedented change in the international economy, with rapid shifts in the terms of trade and interest rates and an intensifying debt crisis. The consequences of those changes had been beneficial for some and catastrophic for others, including many developing countries, which had been forced by the dire state of their economy and the adverse effects on the population, particularly the underprivileged sections, to choose between protecting their domestic socio-economic stability and discharging their international payments obligations. One of the main lessons to be drawn from that decade was that economic development and social progress were indivisible. The Addendum to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation (A/45/137-E/1990/35), which gave an overview of the general trends in the main social indicators across the world and analysed the relationship between the current economic situation and the social sector and discussed the impact of structural adjustments on populations, documented substantial social improvements, except in most sub-Saharan African countries and certain Latin American countries where the per capita gross domestic product had dropped below levels prevalent 10 or 20 years previously, and where the fight against infant mortality and illiteracy had slowed down or even started to retreat. At the end of the 1980s, 1 billion people, some 20 per cent of the world's population, 55 per cent of them in Africa, lived in conditions of absolute poverty, induced either by unemployment or by political and economic upheavals. International economic assistance and development co-operation, when combined with effective national policies, significantly advanced the struggle to eradicate poverty and promote social development. Growing external trade and stable prices stimulated growth and employment by leading to increased investments, an expansion of production, an increase in fiscal revenues and, therefore, new social programmes for the poor. Unfortunately, current prospects of high interest rates, depressed commodity prices and a drop in overseas development assistance from 0.36 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries in 1988 to 0.33 per cent in 1989 were far from encouraging and had to be improved. The report in document A/45/398, compiled at the request of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, reviewed efforts by the United Nations agencies to combat poverty and would itself be followed by a more comprehensive report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. Thanks to the end of the cold war and to disarmament, and despite the Gulf crisis, Governments had the necessary resources to fight the real enemies of man - poverty and disease - and they could do so in the spirit of international co-operation.

7. The development of human resources was another area requiring close attention, as was evident from the conclusions of document A/45/451 submitted to the General Assembly on the implementation of its resolution 44/213. There was a growing awareness that human-resources development was a source of immediate gains at the human level and also a crucial means of expanding the production capacity of countries. It largely depended on national policies, which could, however, be usefully supplemented by international measures aimed at promoting the inflow of

(Mr. Ahmed)

external resources, at analysing and comparing the relevant policies and at drawing the attention of States to the importance of human resources in their economies.

8. A large part of the work undertaken by the Department was concerned with women. For the previous three years the World Economic Survey had included a special section on the socio-economic attainment of women. The 1990 Survey (E/1990/55) analysed the income distribution, education, health, nutrition and fertility of women and examined progress made in the access of women to advances in science, technology and medicine. It concluded that women were contributing more to all aspects of public life in their countries.

9. The Statistical Office continued to play a leading role in compiling statistics and indicators on women and in promoting and co-ordinating the use of those statistics in the United Nations system, for instance, by setting up the Women's Indicators and Statistics Data Base (WISTAT) with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The data base and several publications based on it were the fruit of collaboration between the Office and the Division for the Advancement of Women in Vienna, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the statistical services of the specialized agencies and the Population Division. Work had just been concluded on a new wall chart on the situation of women in 1990, to form part of the publication on statistical trends on women that would appear at the end of 1990.

10. With regard to the application of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, the Commission on the Status of Women had decided that the second review and appraisal, to be made in 1995, would be based on analysis of national reports and statistics gathered by the United Nations. The Commission had also reaffirmed the importance of reflecting women's remunerated and unremunerated contribution to development in national accounts, and had called on Governments and the United Nations to intensify work in that area. The Statistical Commission had decided that a technical report on methods of compilation, evaluation and analysis of statistics was needed to assist countries in the task. It had stressed the need to improve the understanding of women's role in the economy in order to rectify inequities in women's economic situation and provide a firmer foundation for social and economic planning. Methods of compiling statistics on the informal sector had also been developed in special field studies in Africa, and a compilation of those statistics was now being prepared.

11. In the area of population and women, the Population Division had organized a meeting of experts in March 1990, which had produced a set of important recommendations to Governments and others concerning international migrations and women. Among the other projects currently under way, mention might first be made of a comparative study of changes in women's status in relation to fertility and child-rearing responsibilities, a study based on case studies in progress in several developing countries. Secondly, a global survey of government policies regarding women's reproductive health, in particular contraception, sterilization, abortion and maternal health and mortality, was in progress.

(Mr. Ahmed)

12. With respect to the question of aging, the Statistical Office, in celebration of the tenth anniversary in 1992 of the World Assembly on Aging, planned to publish a special issue of the 1990 Demographic Yearbook, dealing in particular with disability and the living arrangements of elderly persons. It was also planned to publish a separate report on the situation of elderly women. With respect to aging as a population issue, an international conference on aging populations would be held in Japan. Organized by several United Nations bodies and Japanese organizations, it would bring together scholars and high-level officials from all parts of the world to review recent and future prospects for demographic aging and changes in the structure of households in both developing and developed countries. It would also examine the implications of such trends for family support of the elderly and more particularly for housing and policies likely to contribute to promoting family support of its older members.

13. With regard to the disabled, the Statistical Office was following a two-pronged approach, being firstly concerned with the harmonization of concepts and definitions of disability and secondly with the gathering and dissemination of statistics on disability. It had recently completed the first Disability Statistics Compendium, covering 55 countries and 12 major demographic and socio-economic topics concerning disability. An article on a demographic approach to the study of disability would also be published in the United Nations Population Bulletin, intended to encourage demographers and statisticians to undertake research into the scientific aspects of disability.

14. The United Nations had continued to co-operate with the World Health Organization in fighting against the ever-graver AIDS pandemic, laying particular emphasis on the social and economic consequences of the disease, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/86. It particularly stressed the potentially serious implications of the disease for women and children. As part of its work the Department was studying those aspects of the question which fell within its remit, as reflected in a project proposal on the socio-economic impact of AIDS currently under review by UNDP. The Population Division, under the global strategy for the prevention and control of AIDS of the World Health Organization, and with additional support from UNFPA, had convened in December 1989 a workshop on modelling the demographic impact of AIDS, in order to review the various methodologies currently being used to project the demographic consequences of the pandemic in countries heavily affected by AIDS, such as those in Africa. The subject was crucial to the formulation and evaluation of policies and programmes to deal with the disease. The workshop, the proceedings of which would be published shortly, had made a significant contribution to the better understanding of the sources of variations in projections of the demographic impact of the disease, and had produced a set of guidelines for future projections.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

15. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the recommendations concerning the organization of the session set out in section II of document A/45/250, which had been adopted by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting. He wished to stress in particular that meetings must begin on time so that full use could be made of the time allocated; a meeting could be opened once one quarter of the members were present. Where explanations of vote were concerned, he wished to recall General Assembly decision 34/401, which provided that a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting was different from its vote in the Committee. The General Assembly had also decided that statements made in a Main Committee should not be reproduced in extenso. Similarly, to save time, the practice of making concluding statements was to be dispensed with, except for statements by the presiding officers.

16. As to questions related to the programme budget, draft resolutions with financial implications could not be adopted unless they were accompanied by a statement of financial implications drawn up by the Secretariat. Sufficient time must be allowed for the preparation of the estimate of expenditure and for its consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee.

17. He also wished to draw attention to paragraph 6 of resolution 35/10 A, in which the General Assembly had decided that all proposals affecting the schedule of conferences and meetings made at its sessions should be reviewed by the Committee on Conferences. Furthermore, he wished to remind delegations that regulation 4.9 of the Regulations Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (resolution 37/234, annex) provided that no Council, Commission or other competent body should take a decision involving either a change in the programme budget approved by the General Assembly or the possible requirement of expenditure unless it had received and taken account of a report from the Secretary-General on the programme budget implications of the proposal.

18. Owing to the Organization's continuing financial difficulties and to the reforms that were under way, the General Assembly had decided to suspend its forty-fifth session on 18 December 1990, and to conclude its work for that session by 16 September 1991.

19. With regard to the programme of work (A/C.3/45/L.1), a provisional timetable - which was the same as the timetable for the previous year, but updated - had been drawn up in accordance with the usual criteria: items had been grouped together and would be considered in the same order as in the past. The Working Group on the Drafting of an International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families would not meet since it had concluded its work and submitted its final report. Furthermore, the time allocated for consideration of the second and third clusters of items would be reduced by one day; however, one day had been added for consideration of the fourth cluster of items (which included

(The Chairman)

an additional item entitled "New international humanitarian order"), and the fifth and sixth clusters of items. In addition, the item on international action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking would be considered after the fourth cluster.

20. In order to make the best possible use of conference services, the timetable should be adhered to as closely as possible, particularly with regard to the submission of draft proposals. It was therefore particularly important that resolutions, which were generally the subject of lengthy negotiations, should be drafted by their main sponsors as soon as possible, that representatives should put their names on the list of speakers promptly and that the adjournment or cancellation of meetings owing to a lack of speakers should be avoided.

21. He asked delegations to limit their statements to 10 minutes per cluster of items and suggested that rights of reply should be limited to five minutes for the first statement and to three minutes for the second statement.

22. As an economy measure, 24 hours' notice was required for night meetings and for extensions and cancellations of meetings. In 1990, the Committee would be able to hold all scheduled official meetings. Meetings of the regional groups and informal meetings however, would be limited. Furthermore, in the absence of funds to pay for overtime, the summary of meetings that appeared in the Journal of the United Nations would often be issued with a time-lag of one day.

23. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) provided additional information concerning the document on the state of preparation of documentation (A/C.3/45/L.1/Add.1) and more specifically the first cluster of items. With regard to agenda item 88, the report of Mr. Ahmed Khalifa, the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities would soon be available. In respect of item 91, the report of the Secretary-General on the financial situation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination would be issued on 26 September. Lastly, with regard to item 98, mention should be made of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/45/3, chap. III, sect. A), which was to be issued on 8 October, the basic documents E/1990/20 and Add.1-3 and the note of the Secretary-General on the study of the results achieved and the obstacles encountered during the first Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the first half of the Second Decade, drawn up by Mr. Eide, the Special Rapporteur, in accordance with paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 44/52. The publication of the note was scheduled for 20 September.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the programme of work for the session set out in document A/C.3/45/L.1

25. It was so decided.

26. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.3/45/L.2, which related to decision 44/435, by which the General Assembly had decided to defer consideration of the draft decision entitled "Programme of work of the Third Committee" until its forty-fifth session (A/C.3/44/L.2).

27. Mr. STUART (Australia) said that the previous year, the Committee had discussed the possibility of establishing an open-ended working group to consider appropriate ways and means of rationalizing the Committee's programme of work (A/44/848, A/C.3/44/SR.60 and 61). Many delegations had continued that discussion and had expressed their support for a co-ordinated effort in that regard. His delegation proposed that the following decision should be adopted: "The Committee decides to establish an open-ended working group to consider appropriate ways and means of rationalizing the Committee's programme of work, including existing proposals". In order to meet, the working group could make use of the time allotted for the meetings scheduled for consideration of the first and second clusters of items which would be cancelled. That approach had the advantage of not requiring additional resources.

28. Mrs. TAVARES ALVAREZ (Dominican Republic) said that she supported the Australian proposal.

29. Mrs. SHERMAN-PETER (Bahamas) said that she supported the proposal by Australia while stressing that, although it was essential to rationalize the work of the Committee, it was at the same time necessary to bear in mind the importance of all the items inscribed on the agenda. Her delegation proposed that the Chairman of the Committee should also be the chairman of the working group.

30. Mr. GALAL (Egypt) said that he supported the Australian proposal and stressed the need to consider the proposals that had already been put forward at previous sessions.

31. Miss ZINDOGA (Zimbabwe) and Mr. RASTAM (Malaysia) said that they supported the proposals by Australia and the Bahamas.

32. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to establish an open-ended working group to consider ways and means of rationalizing the Committee's programme of work, including existing proposals.

33. It was so decided.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that the Committee wished that he would also be the chairman of the working group and that that body would meet on dates which would be agreed upon subsequently, particularly those on which meetings of the Third Committee would be cancelled.

35. It was so decided.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that he wished to read out the list of the special rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights who had been requested by the General Assembly to submit a report to it at the current session. Under agenda item 12, Mr. José Pastor Ridruejo (Spain) would report on the human-rights situation in El Salvador; Mr. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl (El Salvador) would submit a report on the human-rights situation in Iran; and Mr. Felix Ermacora (Austria) would submit a report on the human-rights situation in Afghanistan. Furthermore, under item 103, Mr. Enrique Bernales Ballesteros (Peru) would submit a report on the question of the use of mercenaries as a means of impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination. The special rapporteurs would be invited to participate in the work of the Committee on agenda item 91. It was customary to invite also Mr. Ahmed Khalifa, the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

37. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that the estimated travel costs of Mr. Ahmed Khalifa amounted to $4,300 and would be financed through funds available for the biennium 1990-1991.

38. The CHAIRMAN, said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to invite Mr. Khalifa to come in order to introduce his report.

39. It was so decided.

40. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would begin its substantive debate on 8 October, when it would take up consideration of the first cluster of items, concerning racism and racial discrimination, which would be introduced by the representative of the Centre for Human Rights. He invited all delegations wishing to participate in the general debate on the first cluster of items to contact the Committee secretariat without delay.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
3rd meeting
held on
Monday, 8 October 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

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ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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A/C.3/45/SR.3
22 October 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

1. Mr. GROLIG (Germany) nominated Mr. Mario de León (Philippines) for the office of Rapporteur.

2. Mr. de León (Philippines) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

3. Mr. BLANCA (Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation) said that the issues before the Third Committee touched each and every aspect of the human condition. They included the need for the full and unhindered enjoyment of human rights, the exercise of the right to self-determination, the need to protect and promote the interests of vulnerable social groups, drug abuse control, and crime prevention and criminal justice. The dramatic increase in the awareness of fundamental rights among citizens of all nations had contributed to far-reaching changes in political and economic systems in many parts of the world. At the same time, increases in drug-related offences and in crime in general were eroding social structures and had made civil administration and governance almost impossible in many parts of the world. Those were issues that not only affected life in a direct and personal way, but also determined how societies were organized and how they interacted with each other.

4. The extraordinary political events of 1989 and the process of democratization taking place in several parts of the world were contributing to a new emphasis on those questions. The erosion of ideological differences, the cause of world-wide tension during the past 40 years, would strengthen international co-operation. The issues before the Committee needed to be seen in a new broad perspective, with the full realization that economic development and social progress were a sine qua non for a just and lasting peace.

5. His intention was to focus on two themes: first, on the need to take advantage of recent political developments in order to achieve progress on social-development and human-rights issues; second, on the importance of restoring the link between economic and social questions and human-rights issues.

6. One of the by-products of the political developments had been an improved international atmosphere. The opening up of political processes and economic arrangements, and the resurgence of democratic movements stemmed mainly from mounting internal pressures. Experiences in other countries and the lack of improvement in economic conditions contributed to the pressure for political and economic reforms. The current period of transition was a complex one, but the process that had been set in motion would surely create favourable conditions for the enjoyment of human rights and civil liberties. It was therefore not a time for confrontation, but a period in which it was necessary to consolidate the current trends and encourage the nascent movement towards democratization.

7. A better future would not come by itself. In much of the developing world, economic stagnation was impeding social progress and the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. One of the concerns that emerged from the recent political changes was that the safety net provided by socialism in the area of welfare and social services might be lost in the transition towards a free-market economy. While the end of the cold war was a welcome sign, it was important to ensure that social services, the central features of centrally-planned economies, were fully reflected in the economic and political framework that was likely to replace the old order.

8. He reiterated that the close link between economic and social issues had often been ignored. Economic deprivation had often been the root cause of many of the social ills that afflicted the global society. In his capacity as Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, he had an opportunity to witness, at close range, the global economic and social landscape, the requitals of development and the tribulations of underdevelopment, the intransigence of the privileged and the helplessness of the dispossessed. Lasting world-wide peace could be achieved only when economic and social justice was realized not only within nations but also among them. Unfortunately, the gap between the developed and the developing countries was continuing to grow. Often that disparity derived from an unjust trading environment, and from economic and financial systems that favoured the powerful. Those disparities caused political tension and social disorder. One example was the unprecedented level of migration from the developing to the developed countries. That was similar to what was happening within many developing countries, where neglect of the agricultural sector had prompted major population shifts from rural to urban areas, leading to the senseless creation of megalopolises. In that context, the adoption of an international convention on the rights of all migrant workers and their families would help to lessen the possibility of social and cultural dislocation and economic exploitation.

9. The disparities at the global level were also being reflected at the national level, where the emergence of parallel societies - one rich and powerful, the other deprived and dispossessed - had led to the creation of distinct and sharply separated economic and social classes. That had contributed to alarming increases in crime at the national and international levels, and had aggravated the problem of drug abuse, illicit production and trafficking. Consequently, there was a need to ensure that national economic and social policies addressed that issue by enabling the society to share the benefits of economic progress and the exercise of political authority, on an equitable and just basis.

10. It was important for the Committee to address the social issues on its agenda in the broader context of human development, which after all was the central focus of concern. It was self-evident that an improvement in economic conditions in the developing countries would promote the full enjoyment of human rights by their citizens. In the developed countries, removal of economic and social disparities would contribute to that process. The importance of the economic dimension of social and humanitarian issues - and of the social dimension of economic issues - must not be underestimated. In that connection, it might be useful to strengthen the link between the work of the Third Committee and that of the Second Committee, through joint informal consultations on specific issues.

(Mr. Blanca)

11. The Third Committee would be considering the report of the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, recently held at Havana, Cuba. He had represented the Secretary-General at the Congress. At Havana many Governments had recognized that increased criminality and corruption in public administration were among the factors impeding economic growth and social development, thus underscoring the relationship between economic and social issues. The Third Committee would also be addressing a number of issues concerning United Nations activities in the field of drug abuse control. Drug abuse was a problem gnawing at the very fabric of society. Fortunately, the General Assembly at its special session on that question in February 1990, and the world ministerial summit in London on the illicit demand for drugs and the cocaine threat had demonstrated the strong resolve of the international community to attack all dimensions of the problem in a coherent manner, through multilateral action. The United Nations would need to be fully capable of effectively carrying out new programmes to combat drug abuse. In that context, the Committee would have an opportunity to consider the Secretary-General's proposals on the restructuring of the relevant United Nations units. The Committee's decisions would affect the manner in which the United Nations would carry out its future role and responsibility in that area.

12. In conclusion, he stressed the importance of rationalizing the Committee's programme of work. That had become all the more necessary at a time when the political changes and the disappearance of rhetoric from the Committee's deliberations could pave the way for genuine progress in its work.

AGENDA ITEM 88: ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO THE RACIST AND COLONIALIST REGIME OF SOUTH AFRICA (A/45/552)

AGENDA ITEM 91: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (A/45/18, A/45/139, A/45/140, A/45/174, A/45/178, A/45/202, A/45/203, A/45/216, A/45/222, A/45/225, A/45/254, A/45/265, A/45/269, A/45/402, A/45/406, A/45/579)

AGENDA ITEM 98: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (A/45/3, chap. III, sect. A; A/45/174, A/45/443, A/45/525)

AGENDA ITEM 103: IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND OF THE SPEEDY GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES FOR THE EFFECTIVE GUARANTEE AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (A/45/488, A/45/500)

13. Mr. MARTENSON (Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights) said that human rights might well be the field in which the United Nations had made the most extensive progress. As the Secretary-General had pointed out in his report on the work of the Organization (A/45/1), the past year had seen the conversion of human rights from a subsidiary theme of the international discourse to a dominant concern. Respect for human rights was fundamental if United Nations peace-keeping operations were to be successful. In addition, the relationship between economic

(Mr. Martenson)

and social development and human rights was becoming increasingly evident. The Secretary-General had also spoken in his report of the interdependence of the three major objectives of the United Nations in the following terms: "Resolution of conflicts, observance of human rights and the promotion of development together weave the fabric of peace; if one of these strands is removed, the tissue will unravel." The very grave consequences of the malfunctioning of the international economy, which caused some nations to grow increasingly richer while others become poorer, had also been stressed by the Secretary-General. In that respect, it should be borne in mind that in article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it was affirmed that "everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized".

14. Human rights must also be an important element in economic development, and stress must be laid on the need to measure that development by improvements in human lives and not exclusively in monetary terms. National development policies must ensure that economic and social progress was shared by all. The Declaration on the Right to Development adopted in 1986 had laid a foundation for the integration of human rights concepts into the planning, execution and evaluation of development projects so that respect for human rights and the effectiveness of those projects were strengthened and secured.

15. A study of the human rights situation in the world today revealed a picture of sharp contrasts. Over the past few years amazing changes had taken place in many parts of the world. In eastern and central Europe, Latin America and Asia, democratic movements had enabled people to control their own destinies; Namibia was now a United Nations Member State, and the prospect of a non-racial democracy in South Africa in the not too distant future was not unrealistic. On the other hand, each day brought reports of torture, killings and arbitrary or summary executions of people; the violent oppression of dissent; discrimination and other violations of human rights. In many places religious and cultural freedom did not exist, and some people were still denied the right to self-determination. A resurgence of expressions of racial hatred, intolerance and discrimination appeared to be taking place. In 1990 special attention had been focused on the rights of the child, which had made it possible, among other things, to acquire full knowledge of the plight of millions of children in developed and developing countries.

16. Consequently, in some parts of the world, although international tension and sterile ideological confrontation had been reduced and international co-operation increased, it should not be forgotten that failure to ensure respect for human rights could well ignite renewed discord and conflict in the future. The objective for the immediate future must be to ensure respect for human rights throughout the world. In order to achieve that objective, the existing international machinery for the protection of human rights must be maintained and reinforced. Efforts in the field of public information must touch every corner of the globe in order to create a true universal culture of human rights.

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17. With the coming into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the possible adoption of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the United Nations human rights programme would embark on the implementation of a new type of human rights instrument - an instrument which covered practically the whole range of human rights in respect of a particular group of people. In that regard, he said that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women would provide a valuable precedent.

18. Another important element of the future work of the United Nations would be to enlarge the participation of people in the adoption of decisions affecting their lives. Over the past two or three years, democratic political institutions had been established or restored in a number of countries, and calls were being made to increase the direct participation of people in public affairs. Non-governmental organizations were instrumental in encouraging participation, and ways should be explored of permitting people of regions where non-governmental organizations had been slow in developing to establish non-governmental organizations or to strengthen those which already existed.

19. Another subject of particular concern for the future was that of finding ways of promoting the peaceful and constructive solution of problems affecting minorities. For about 10 years the Commission on Human Rights had been preparing a draft declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. In 1990, considerable progress had been made in that respect in that the first reading of the draft declaration had been completed. Everything possible should be done to come to a peaceful and constructive solution of the problems confronting ethnic, religious, national, linguistic and other minorities since those problems could have a destabilizing effect at national and international levels.

20. During recent years, the work-load of the Centre for Human Rights had grown dramatically while its resources had diminished, as described in the Secretary-General's report to the Economic and Social Council on the matter (E/1990/50). As noted by the Secretary-General in that report, the resources available to the Centre for carrying out an expanding programme of work were beginning to prove dangerously insufficient. And in that sphere of United Nations activities, human dignity and individual human lives and well-being were at stake. The human being was at the centre of all United Nations activities in the field of human rights. The budget of the Centre for Human Rights amounted to less than 1 per cent of the regular United Nations budget. Furthermore, a not insignificant part of the Centre's resources (just under 14 per cent) was used to enable representatives of Governments and expert members of Committees and similar organs to take part in meetings of such bodies. Another 5 per cent went towards support activities. The remaining funds must support the basic activities of the human rights programme approved by the General Assembly and other organs. At the session now under way, the Third Committee was beginning to consider four key human rights items on the General Assembly's agenda, three of which concerned United Nations activities against racial discrimination (one of them referring to South Africa in particular) and the fourth dealing with the realization of the fundamental right of people to self-determination.

(Mr. Martenson)

21. The fight against racial discrimination and racism was at the very foundation of the Organization's work in the field of human rights, and since the first session of the General Assembly, the utmost importance had been attached to the issue of discrimination. The abhorrent system of apartheid, the most clearly institutionalized form of racism, had attracted the highest degree of attention from the United Nations over the years. The Charter itself insisted upon "the equal rights of men and women and of nations large or small" and urged respect for human rights "without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". Racial discrimination gave rise not only to internal tensions but also to conflicts between States which could endanger international stability. Within any society, discrimination prevented the full participation of all groups and all citizens in the economic, political and social processes.

22. The United Nations had adopted a series of cardinal documents aimed at eliminating racism and apartheid. Moreover, the General Assembly had proclaimed the period 1973-1983 the United Nations Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the period 1983-1993 the "Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination". The basic objectives of those two decades had been to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion; to eliminate prejudice and racial discrimination; and to abolish régimes and policies based on racism. With those objectives in view, the Assembly had approved a broad programme of activities for the two decades. The Committee had before it a most valuable report by Mr. Eide on the achievements made and obstacles encountered during the First Decade and the first half of the Second Decade. That report also contained many suggestions worthy of consideration.

23. The activities promoted by the United Nations in that field included the strengthening of national legislation and institutions for the prevention of racism and the promotion of racial harmony. Priority had been given to the preparation of model legislative texts on anti-discrimination. Expert advisory services were also offered to assist Governments in integrating model norms into their specific constitutional and legislative context. The first draft of model legislation against racial discrimination had been prepared, and it was his intention, if resources were available, to organize in 1991 a meeting of experts from human-rights bodies and the academic and legal communities and also those involved directly in the fight against racism in order to critically review the model text.

24. As would be seen from the Secretary-General's report on the Second Decade, the Assembly, in resolution 42/47, had prescribed a number of activities to be implemented during the second half of the Second Decade and had asked that they should be reflected in the proposed budget for each biennium (1990-1991, 1992-1993). Prior to that, the activities of the Second Decade had been funded out of extra-budgetary resources. As requested, the activities for 1990-1991 had been incorporated in the regular work programme of the Centre for Human Rights but, owing to the budgetary restriction prevailing at that time, there had been no increase in regular resources. That was a serious handicap for the activities of the Second Decade.

(Mr. Martenson)

25. Key elements in the efforts to fight racism and racial discrimination were the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Committee's work had, however, been impaired for the fifth consecutive year by its financial difficulties. Owing to the non-payment by several States parties over a number of years of their assessed contributions under the Convention, the spring session of the Committee had had to be cancelled. Fortunately it had been possible to hold a session in August 1990. At that session, the Committee had examined 41 reports submitted by 21 States parties under article 9 of the Convention. He urged States parties which had not yet done so to fulfil their financial obligations in order to allow the Committee to pursue its work.

26. In connection with that item, the Third Committee also had before it information on the status of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. The fight against apartheid had been a major component of United Nations actions for equality and against discrimination and was a crucial element of the Second Decade. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of assistance to the colonialist and racist régimes of southern Africa was available to the Third Committee in document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1990/13 and Add.1.

27. One of the purposes of the United Nations was "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples". The right to self-determination had been repeatedly qualified by the General Assembly as a prerequisite for the full enjoyment of all fundamental human rights. Self-determination was one of the pillars of the international human-rights order. At the previous session, the General Assembly had adopted three resolutions on the exercise of the right to self-determination, and had requested a report - now before the Committee - on the strengthening of assistance to colonial Territories and peoples by Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. A report had also been requested on the question of the use of mercenaries as a means to violate human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination.

28. In the period since the very first session of the General Assembly, the United Nations had put into place a true international code of human rights, of which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights formed the centrepiece. There was also a system of committees of independent experts charged with monitoring State compliance with their international undertakings, encouraging respect for human rights and dealing with individual complaints. Three other methods of implementing United Nations human-rights norms had evolved over the years: the consideration by the Commission on Human Rights through special rapporteurs or a working group of individual reports on particularly serious violations of human rights, the study by the Commission and the General Assembly of the human-rights situation in specific countries or territories, and the consideration by the human-rights organs of petitions from individuals and organizations which tended to show patterns of serious violations of human rights. In each of those areas, a major objective was to establish dialogue with the Governments concerned.

(Mr. Martenson)

29. The work of the United Nations, in setting human rights standards had served to encourage the adoption of national legislative norms which benefited millions of people. However, it was not at the international level, but rather at the national and local levels, that the enjoyment of human rights must be realized. Recent years had seen an expansion of the human rights programme aimed at fostering conditions for the enjoyment of human rights. The first requirement for effective national protection was widespread knowledge among a country's citizens of their basic human rights and the procedures available to ensure that such rights were respected. In that connection, the General Assembly had launched the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights in 1988. The second requirement was the existence of adequate national laws and institutions. The United Nations programme of advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights provided the services of experts in legislation and constitutional law so that countries could revise their legislation and establish national institutions. As a result, national human rights commissions had been established and the penal code and other laws had been revised.

30. The conceptual foundation of the United Nations human rights programme was the relationship between legislation, implementation and information/education, which had made it possible to determine the programmes underlying priorities and ensure the maximum and most effective possible use of the insufficient resources available to it. The programme focused on the information/education element, for in order to know one's rights, one must be aware of them. Accordingly, an effort was being made to spread the human rights message to all regions and all communities, and to respond effectively and efficiently to the growing need for information expressed by Governments, groups and individuals in all Member States. Indeed, the greater the awareness, the greater the number of ratifications, requests and actions in the human rights field.

31. In the past 45 years, the United Nations had achieved real progress in the legal definition of basic human rights requirements, the creation of an ever more effective system of implementing international human rights standards, and, most recently, in the elaboration of programmes designed to strengthen national institutions and mechanisms to protect human rights. At the conceptual level, a better understanding had been achieved of the reciprocal relationship among the various human rights and the role they played in promoting the other objectives of the United Nations.

32. However, much remained to be done and it was essential to ensure that human rights became a reality and were implemented so as to secure peace and universal well-being. It was time to review the progress achieved, assess the work being done and attempt to chart the future path of human rights efforts. In that regard, the report on the proposed world conference on human rights demonstrated the general convergence of views which prevailed among Governments, specialized agencies, United Nations organs and non-governmental organizations on the desirability of organizing such a Conference.

33. Mr. BERNALES BALLESTEROS (Special Rapporteur) introduced the report on the use of mercenaries as a means to violate human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination (A/45/488). The report took up, in particular, mercenary activities in Africa, the attack on Maldives and developments in the Central American conflict.

34. In the chapter on Africa, the report covered the coup d'état in the Comoros in November 1989; the current situation in Angola regarding the military activities of UNITA and developments in South Africa in connection with reports of mercenary activities in which the South African Government appeared to be directly or indirectly involved. It also drew attention to encouraging signs of a possible change in the policy of apartheid.

35. The mercenary attack on Maldives had been aimed at a legally constituted Government. At issue was the use of an internal conflict in a third country. The sovereignty of Maldives had been seriously affected when it gave up territory to mercenaries of that third country. Hostile, illegal activities had been fomented against a third country and had sparked dangerous tension, in view of the illegal arms and drug trafficking in the Indian Ocean and the potential militarization of that region.

36. Lastly, he referred to the détente in Central America, particularly the end of the conflict in Nicaragua, the process of ratification of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, together with its conclusions and recommendations, and the solution of various protracted regional conflicts. In order to make way for a climate of détente and peace, the international community would have to remain vigilant and demonstrate that it was prepared to impose sanctions in order to help eliminate any type of mercenary activity detrimental to the self-determination and human rights of peoples.

37. Mr. TRAXLER (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States, said that the Community had repeatedly condemned all forms of racism and racial discrimination, in particular in the Declaration of the European Council on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Xenophobia, drawn up at Dublin on 25 and 26 June 1990. The European Community considered any form of discrimination as an offence to human rights and fundamental freedoms and a denial of the principle of equality, justice and liberty for all.

38. No society was immune to that shameful practice, but it was incumbent on all Governments to pursue policies which tackled the problem, taking an approach which combined legislation with education, in order to eradicate prejudices and hostility based on ignorance and fear. In that connection, the European Community attached great importance to the promotion of understanding and tolerance among all races.

39. The year 1990 marked the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. With 130 States parties, it had the greatest number of ratifications or accessions ever attained by any human rights instrument. None the

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

less, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, faced serious financial difficulties because some States parties had not met their obligations. Therefore, the Twelve reaffirmed their readiness to study all proposals in that regard, including those contained in resolution 1990/25 of the Commission on Human Rights, so that CERD and other human rights supervisory bodies could fulfil their mandates.

40. The commitment of the international community to fighting against racism had been manifested in 1983, in the proclamation of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The Twelve hoped that the consensus approach would be resumed and continued so that the objectives of the Decade could be achieved, and they commended the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Decade. In 1989, the Twelve had continued to support the activities of the Programme, contributed to the trust fund for the Programme and participated in meetings convened under it.

41. Apartheid was the most abhorrent form of racial discrimination and an immoral system of institutionalized State racism. The objective of the European Community was the complete eradication of the apartheid system by peaceful means and without delay and its replacement by a united, non-racial and democratic State, which guaranteed equal citizenship for all and respect for human rights. Noteworthy among the recent developments in South Africa were the commitments by the Government to abolish the system of apartheid and to set in motion a process of dialogue. The Twelve endorsed that political process; welcomed the outcome of the pre-negotiations between the South African Government and the African National Congress (ANC) - in particular, the suspension of the armed struggle proclaimed by ANC and the decisions regarding the release of political prisoners and amnesty for exiles; and hoped for a speedy start to negotiations on the new constitution. Although aware that the road ahead was long and difficult, the European Community was concerned that violence had risen to unprecedented levels. Accordingly, it hoped that the South African Government would stop the violence in an impartial manner and urge the parties concerned to resolve their differences by means of dialogue.

42. All human beings were entitled to exercise the right of self-determination, in any place and under any conditions. Self-determination was a right of peoples, not of States. The Twelve fully supported that fundamental right and were striving for its universal respect and implementation. They therefore condemned the brutal invasion, occupation and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, which constituted a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The international community had denounced that violation of the fundamental principles and norms of international law. The Twelve recalled the obligation of all States to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions and called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops from Kuwait and the restoration of Kuwait's territorial integrity and sovereignty, under the authority of its legitimate Government. The Iraqi Government must respect its obligations and allow all foreign nationals who so desired to leave Iraq and Kuwait. Its decision to use foreign nationals as a human shield was illegal and morally repugnant.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

43. More than two years after the Geneva agreements and 18 months after the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the Twelve continued to be concerned about the protracted conflict in Afghanistan and stressed the need for an intra-Afghan dialogue, in which all sectors of the population would take part, with a view to establishing a fully representative government. Accordingly, they supported the Secretary-General in his efforts to facilitate a settlement based on the right to self-determination of the Afghan people.

44. The European Community was in favour of seeking a comprehensive political settlement in Cambodia which would ensure the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and neutrality of that country, as well as the right of the people to choose their own government in free and fair elections organized by the United Nations, in accordance with Security Council resolution 668. In that connection, the Community welcomed the framework agreed upon by the five permanent members of the Security Council and its adoption by the Cambodian factions in Jakarta on 10 September 1990 and supported the agreement regarding the establishment of the Supreme National Council.

45. The Twelve stressed the urgent need for Israel to begin a political dialogue with the Palestinian people which could lead to a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. They considered that the settlement policies of Israel in the occupied territories constituted an obstacle to achieving peace in the region and, consequently, reiterated that such settlements were illegal under international law.

46. The people of Namibia had exercised their right to self-determination, in a free expression of their will. The Twelve rejoiced that Namibia had taken its place in the United Nations as a free, sovereign and independent State.

47. The Twelve continued to support fully the efforts of the Secretary-General to set up a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. They were fully convinced that if the parties concerned continued to follow a constructive approach a referendum would be held at an early date.

48. The European Community welcomed that fact that the people of Myanmar had exercised its right to vote in the elections, the outcome of which indicated a clear desire on the part of the people to have a democratic, multi-party system of government; to transfer power to a civilian government chosen by the elected Parliament; and to release political prisoners in order to allow them to participate in the democratic process.

49. The Twelve wished to express their profound satisfaction at the progress made towards overcoming the divisions of Europe and restoring the unity of the continent. Given the legitimate aspirations of the Baltic peoples, the Twelve continued to support the dialogue which had been initiated between the representatives of the three Baltic Republics and the Government of the Soviet Union, with a view to a political settlement.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

50. The exercise of the right of self-determination was a continuous process, not a single event. Peoples must have the opportunity to choose their governments and social systems freely and to change them if they so desired, without the threat of foreign intervention, coup d'état or state of emergency. Each individual had the inherent right to exercise the other rights set out in the International Covenants. The United Nations had a very important role to play in that connection. Wherever the right to self-determination was violated, it was natural that the matter should be dealt with by the United Nations, since denial of that right was the concern of people everywhere.

51. Mrs. EKONG (Nigeria) said that all human beings were born equal in dignity and rights. Nevertheless, racism and racial discrimination had caused crises, conflicts and wars, to the detriment of world peace and security. While such practices existed in many parts of the world, South Africa represented the only case of institutionalized discrimination. Apartheid was not only an affront to the conscience and dignity of mankind but had also for many years been a grave threat to international peace and security. However, significant changes were taking place which had the potential to resolve the conflict in South Africa and the region as a whole. Nigeria welcomed the dialogue between ANC and the Government of South Africa as well as the meetings among representatives of other political groups in South Africa. It had commended the opening of membership of the National Party to all races. Despite those changes, the core of apartheid remained intact: the racist Constitution was still the basic law and hundreds of discriminatory statutes governed the lives of the indigenous majority of the South African population. Her delegation believed that the combination of sanctions and pressure had, in part, led to the progress achieved thus far in the struggle to eliminate apartheid; it supported the maintenance of the sanctions until apartheid was eliminated and a free, non-racial, democratic and undivided South Africa was established.

52. Advances in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination and apartheid could not have been made without the standards established by the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, which had provided the basis for effective and concerted international action. Nigeria noted with satisfaction that the number of States parties to the former convention was the highest for any human rights instrument, which demonstrated clearly the international consensus against racism.

53. Her delegation had read with interest the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (A/45/18) and commended the members of the Committee for their continuing efforts to prevent discrimination and to promote racial equality. While it supported the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report, Nigeria regretted the fact that the work of the Committee remained severely hampered by late submission of country reports and insufficient funding resulting from the failure of States parties to fulfil their financial obligations.

(Mrs. Ekong, Nigeria)

54. The Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was an effective strategy since it had enabled co-ordination of the efforts by States and international organizations in that field. Yet, nearly 20 years after the proclamation of the First Decade, the scourge of racism still remained. At its latest meeting, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had expressed its deep concern regarding recent signs of an upsurge of racism, prejudice, discrimination and intolerance.

55. Her delegation supported the activities relating to the Decade as reported by the Secretary-General in documents A/45/443 and E/1990/20/Add.1-3. It believed, however, that more seminars and workshops should be organized to deal with the growing problem of racism and that the human rights fellowship programme should be considerably expanded. It was also important to strengthen national legislations, especially in societies with acute racial divisions and a high incidence of racism. Her delegation urged the Secretariat to expedite action on the draft model legislation and wished to know when they would be circulated to Governments. It also urged that more resources be allocated to the activities of non-governmental organizations, given their influence on national as well as international public opinion.

56. One aim of any efficient strategy must be the mobilization of system-wide resources within the United Nations. In that regard, her delegation considered the inter-agency consultation held in May 1990 to have been very useful and fully endorsed the suggestions made at that meeting.

57. Regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action, there were two problems which might cancel out some of the gains made. The first was the non-implementation of some programmes and activities planned for the first half of the Second Decade. Her delegation would appreciate information from the Secretariat on any action undertaken to implement those programmes. The second problem was more serious. In resolution 42/47, the General Assembly had transferred responsibility for activities under the second half of the Second Decade, 1990-1993, to the Centre for Human Rights. Many delegations, including her own, had subsequently argued the need for the necessary additional resources to be made available to the Centre. In response to that concern, the General Assembly, in paragraph 18 of resolution 44/52, had requested that sufficient additional resources be included in the proposed programme budgets for the bienniums 1990-1991 and 1992-1993. Her delegation would like to know what action had been taken to strengthen the Centre and provide for additional resources as requested by the Assembly.

58. Her delegation agreed with the conclusions and recommendations of the comprehensive and important study contained in document A/45/525, particularly those that were consistent with the established goals of the Decade. It shared the view that apartheid continued to be the most serious problem, to which priority attention should be given. It therefore urged that the United Nations should start immediately to draft a plan for concerted action to implement the specific measures recommended in the course of the Decade.

(Mrs. Ekong, Nigeria)

59. The right to self-determination was fundamental and inalienable. Its violation adversely affected both the full realization of the rights of the individual and the character of inter-State relations. Instances of aggression, occupation by foreign forces, colonial domination and mercenary subversion and intervention were some of the most serious factors impeding the exercise of the right of self-determination. South Africa and Palestine, among others, were areas where the international community must act resolutely to permit the exercise of the right to self-determination.

60. The crisis in the Gulf was currently the gravest threat to international peace and security. Acts of aggression were unacceptable and her delegation called on all the parties concerned to resolve the crisis by peaceful means. It urged Iraq to withdraw all its forces unconditionally from Kuwait, a sovereign and independent nation, so that the people of Kuwait could again enjoy their right to self-determination.

61. It was clear that, despite its achievements, the United Nations could do better in implementing the measures adopted to combat racism and racial discrimination. It was time to reaffirm the Organization's commitment to the prevention and elimination of discrimination, for two different but related reasons. First, because of the new threats, risks and challenges to the gains made; and secondly, to take advantage of the current move in international politics towards democracy, human rights and co-operation.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/45/3)

62. The CHAIRMAN said that he wished to refer to a question arising under agenda item 12, namely, the appearance before the General Assembly of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on southern Africa to present the Working Group's interim report. He recalled that the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1989/5 on the situation of human rights in South Africa, had requested the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts to submit its interim report to the Commission at its forty-sixth session and to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, and its final report to the Commission at its forty-seventh session. The relevant financial implications were set forth in the report on the forty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights (E/1989/20). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed that the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on southern Africa should appear before the General Assembly.

63. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.3/45/L.1)

64. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the Committee's programme of work as contained in document A/C.3/45/L.1, announced that, as a result of unforeseen circumstances, the documents on the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders had yet to be published.

(The Chairman)

65. He therefore proposed that consideration of item 100 (crime prevention and criminal justice) should be postponed and that the item should be placed in the fourth cluster of items on the Committee's agenda. Accordingly, the second cluster of items would be considered from 17 to 23 October, the third cluseter from 24 to 26 October and the fourth cluster, including item 100, from 29 to 31 October. The deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions on the various clusters of items would also have to be changed.

66. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the changes.

67. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
4th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 10 October 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. SOMAVIA	(Chile)
later:	Miss ZINDOGA (Vice-Chairman)	(Zimbabwe)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 88: ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO THE RACIST AND COLONIALIST REGIME OF SOUTH AFRICA (continued) (A/45/552)

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AGENDA ITEM 98: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (A/45/3, chap. III, sect. A, A/45/174, A/45/443, A/45/525)

AGENDA ITEM 103: IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND OF THE SPEEDY GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES FOR THE EFFECTIVE GUARANTEE AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (A/45/488, A/45/500)

1. Miss DIEGUEZ (Mexico) said that the continued existence of racist practices with a legal, political and institutional basis ran counter not only to the principles of justice and international law but also to those of the dignity and equality of all human beings. In December 1990 the twenty-fifth anniversary of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination would be commemorated. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), established pursuant to the Convention, had done essential work by monitoring the implementation of that instrument. However, the precarious financial situation of CERD, which was seriously affecting its work, gave rise to serious concern. A long-term solution must be found as a matter of urgency, given the priority which the issues considered by CERD were accorded in the programme of work of the United Nations. CERD had expressed its readiness to play an active role in the closing years of the Second Decade and in the preparation of the programme to be adopted subsequently, but that would only be possible if the necessary steps were taken to ensure that CERD could continue holding periodic meetings.

2. The Second Decade was nearing its end. The Economic and Social Council had recently observed that, despite the international community's efforts, the main objectives of the Decade had not been achieved and millions of human beings continued to be the victims of racist practices. The same conclusion could be drawn from the study of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Fide, on the achievements made and obstacles encountered during the Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/45/525). It was alarming to note the resurgence and aggravation of racially motivated acts of hostility in various parts of the world. Members of minority groups, such as indigenous peoples and migrant workers and their families, were often the victims of such practices. In that connection, Mexico wished to emphasize how important it was for the General Assembly to adopt the draft convention on the rights of all migrant workers and their families. The adoption

(Miss Dieguez, Mexico)

of the draft convention would constitute an important contribution to the development of international humanitarian law and would fill the gap left by the existing international agreements on migrant workers. Her delegation trusted that the Third Committee and the General Assembly would adopt the draft convention without a vote.

3. One of the most degrading manifestations of racism and racial discrimination was the policy of apartheid of the minority régime in South Africa. The elimination of apartheid was one of the major challenges facing the international community. Efforts must continue to ensure that the relevant recommendations of the Second Decade were implemented. The measures set out in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa and in the many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the subject must likewise be fully implemented. Furthermore, the international pressure on the South African régime must be maintained. The unilateral lifting of sanctions, even if partial, would be premature and contrary to the decisions of the General Assembly. Mexico had no diplomatic or consular relations with South Africa; it had suspended all cultural, educational, sports and other relations and had taken steps to ensure that no financial links were established between the two countries through banking channels.

4. Mexico acknowledged that a positive process of change had begun in South Africa. The main elements had been the freeing of Nelson Mandela, the decision of the African National Congress to suspend the armed struggle and its recent meeting with the South African authorities, and the Government's undertaking to end apartheid. However, the main measures mentioned in the aforementioned Declaration on Apartheid as being necessary to create a propitious climate for serious negotiations still remained to be taken. Consequently, it still seemed uncertain whether far-reaching change was possible. Unless the legal and political bases of apartheid were dismantled, everything that had been achieved thus far might be lost. The dangerous violence which had broken out recently in South Africa showed how fragile the political situation was and how much resistance to genuine change existed within the system.

5. The recent dispatch of a group of United Nations officials to monitor progress made in the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa was an example of the tireless efforts being made by the Secretary-General and the United Nations to bring about a negotiated political solution. Mexico attached great importance to compliance with the Declaration, which expressly recognized that the elimination of apartheid in South Africa was a necessary prerequisite for permanent peace and stability in southern Africa. The maintenance of the minority régime in that region constituted an offence and an act of aggression not only against the South African majority, but also against neighbouring countries. Never before in the history of South Africa had conditions appeared more favourable for the elimination of apartheid. It was therefore imperative to find options for a negotiated political solution to the question of South Africa that would ensure that the majority of the people in that country would be able to exercise their inalienable right to determine their own destiny in a climate of peace and security.

6. Mr. YUNGE (Chile) said that the restoration of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Chilean people meant that, for the first time in 18 years, a popularly elected representative of the Chilean Parliament was able to speak in the Third Committee. In his recent address to the General Assembly, the President of the Republic of Chile, Mr. Patricio Aylwin, had said that "Chile condemns all forms of racism and racial discrimination and in particular, the harmful "apartheid régime". President Aylwin had also spoken of his hope for the earliest possible establishment in South Africa of a non-racial democracy without discrimination and based on respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

7. That message of unequivocable rejection of all racially discriminatory practices had been expressed on various occasions since the new democratic Government of Chile had taken office. In June 1990, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggling People of South Africa, the President of Chile had addressed a personal message to Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, in which he had stated that the new Government of Chile considered it imperative to demonstrate to the international community that Chile was committed to the cause of human rights, especially to the struggle for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. In other United Nations forums, Chile had stated, too, that the work of the Organization would not be completed as long as apartheid persisted. The Government of Chile had taken the necessary internal measures to prevent any transaction that violated the military embargo against South Africa adopted by the Security Council.

8. Equality before the law and non-discrimination against persons, regardless of age, sex or status, were fully enforced in Chile. He was pleased to announce that, as a political expression of Chile's political will, the Chilean Parliament would be adopting the legislative measures required for Chile to accede to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports. Chile had supported the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. That Declaration represented a particularly important milestone in the international struggle against the system of apartheid. While Chile resolutely and enthusiastically supported South Africa's transformation into a non-racial democracy, it believed that partial solutions would not help to produce the desired effects. The steps that had been taken went in the right direction, but they were still not enough. The Government of South Africa had not yet adopted the measures that were most important for bringing full democracy to that nation. It also needed to persuade the white population to accept the new forms of national coexistence.

9. The right of peoples to self-determination was one of the cornerstones of the United Nations. All countries were indissolubly bound by that guiding principle. The recent invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi military forces constituted a serious violation of that right, which was embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Yunge, Chile)

Chile had expressed its desire to bring an end to the occupation and to re-establish the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait, and it had fully supported the Security Council resolutions on that matter. In compliance with Security Council resolution 661 (1990), Chile had drawn up a Supreme Decree for the implementation in Chile of the measures that had been adopted, including the prohibition on the sale or supply of weapons or any other military equipment to Iraq and Kuwait. The United Nations should fulfil its proper role of guaranteeing full respect for the right of peoples to self-determination. In that context, Chile wished to join in expressing its welcome and support for the independence of Namibia.

10. Mr. GALAL (Egypt) said that, unfortunately, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was still experiencing financial difficulties that prevented it from holding its scheduled meetings. His delegation supported the proposal made in the report of the Secretary-General on the question of financing the expenses of the members of the Committee (A/45/579) that a contingency reserve fund should be established in order to provide the Committee with the resources that it needed to carry out its work. It also thought that the activities of the Committee should be financed under the regular budget of the United Nations. Egypt had fully met its financial obligations to the Committee.

11. Egypt was pleased to note that Namibia had finally achieved independence and was already a State Member of the United Nations. Apartheid, however, persisted in South Africa. It was necessary to continue to exert pressure on South Africa to abandon that hideous system, and the international community should maintain the sanctions adopted by the United Nations until South Africa had fulfilled its undertakings completely.

12. Egypt welcomed the report of Mr. Khalifa, Special Rapporteur, on the adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of political, military, economic and other forms of assistance given to the racist and colonialist régime of South Africa (A/45/552). That report was extremely important, since it pointed to the many companies that still maintained business ties with South Africa. Egypt was also pleased to note the report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Fide, on the achievements made and obstacles encountered during the Decades of Struggle against Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/45/525), and it fully supported the recommendations contained therein.

13. His delegation observed that the delegation of Israel had selected passages from regional reports on human rights practices in 1989 published by the United States Department of State. The delegation of Israel now requested that those reports should be circulated as official United Nations documents in order to respond to criticisms of Israeli human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories. That action, which was an attempt to obscure the facts on Israeli practices, was inadmissible, and would lead not only to distortions, but also to the waste of United Nations funds and efforts for the propaganda purposes of certain States.

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

14. Egypt reaffirmed its condemnation of the use of mercenaries as a means to violate human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, and welcomed the report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Bernales Ballesteros, on that subject (A/45/488). Egyptian legislation expressly prohibited the recruitment, financing, training and use of mercenaries. All States should adopt laws leading to the effective prevention of such activities.

15. Miss Zindoga (Zimbabwe) took the Chair.

16. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) said that, in view of the positive changes that had taken place, many Governments would have recourse to the Centre for Human Rights, and its budget, in other words, the human rights budget, should therefore be substantially increased. It was necessary to focus efforts on activities which would produce tangible and relatively rapid results, such as the drafting of model laws or the strengthening of national institutions for the protection of human rights. There must be greater emphasis on the establishment of such institutions and on their strengthening through technical assistance, the provision of information, and the training of specialized personnel. In addition, it would be desirable to hold regular regional seminars for law-enforcement and security officials. The teaching of human rights through basic required courses should be incorporated into curricula from primary school through university.

17. After a brief reference to the progress achieved in Africa, above all the establishment of the Republic of Namibia and the progressive initiatives taken in South Africa, she reiterated the appeal in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa which called for the unconditional release of all political prisoners, the removal of all troops from the townships, the total lifting of the state of emergency, the repeal of all racist legislation and the cessation of all political trials and executions. Her delegation hoped that, with the current movement towards dialogue and negotiation, a period of democracy and peace would begin in South Africa.

18. Referring to the situation which had prevailed in the Arab territories occupied by Israel for more than 23 years, she unequivocally condemned the reprisals, torture, arbitrary detention and imprisonment, killings, abortions caused by blows with rifle butts, systematic destruction of houses, poisonings with toxic gas and expulsions. The latest massacre of Palestinians, which had resulted in more than 20 deaths and some 100 wounded, demonstrated the cruel reality. She also denounced the policy of immigration of Soviet Jews into occupied Arab territories promoted by Israel, with the sole objective of achieving the deliberate demographic modification of the Arab population, a manipulative displacement that the international community should not accept in any case.

19. The objectives set for the two Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had not been achieved. It was regrettable to note the deep racist roots of some problems which had arisen in countries where democracy had swept out unpopular régimes. The scourge of racial discrimination was present in any country where there were minorities, ethnic groups, castes and migrant workers. The

(Mrs. Warzazi, Morocco)

situation became even more serious when discrimination gave rise to persecution, killings, vengeance and crime. Any motive would serve to provoke hatred: nationality, religion, economic or political situation. The resurgence and growth of the right wing in Europe was causing a growing number of victims among the migrant workers who had contributed so much to the prosperity of the States where they worked. Defamatory statements, racist partiality and political manipulation allowed reactionary parties to gain the advantage and win parliamentary seats. In some countries, for example, the Netherlands, there was an awareness that the struggle against racial discrimination could justify the restriction of some fundamental rights, above all, freedom of expression.

20. She pointed out that, for years, article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination had been the subject of major reservations on the part of Western countries, which believed that nothing should impede the exercise of the right to free expression, and she cited an example which had occurred in France. It was clear that any solution to the minority problem must be based on three essential conditions: the political will of the State where the minorities were to be found; the will of the communities to live in peace and harmony, which meant that there was a need to promote mutual knowledge and respect; and co-operation and practical assistance from those States which showed an interest in those minorities.

21. With regard to the role of the international community in the struggle against all forms of racism and racial discrimination, the results would never meet expectations unless sufficient funds were allocated to complete the activities entrusted to the United Nations.

22. After recalling the initiative proposed by Morocco 10 years earlier regarding the work of the Third Committee on self-determination, she noted that the political behaviour of invading other countries had not changed. Although the end of confrontation and the cold war would appear to justify the dream of a world at peace, Kuwait, a sovereign State Member of the United Nations, had been invaded, an event which posed a grave threat to all the countries in the Gulf region and would have disastrous consequences for all developing countries already seriously affected by debt, underdevelopment and extreme poverty. Only dialogue and the political will for peace could prevail in finding a solution to that regrettable problem; that solution could only be found through the re-establishment of full sovereignty and legitimacy in the realization of the right of all peoples of the world to respect for their independence and free self-determination.

23. Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil) reiterated the firm stand taken by his country against all forms of racism and racial discrimination and its commitment to their total elimination. In his address to the General Assembly, the President of Brazil had reiterated the full support of his country for international efforts to create conditions which would guarantee the observance of human rights in their broadest sense. He had emphasized that there should be no artificial or specious distinctions made among the various modalities of human rights and that affronts to their enjoyment must be denounced and combated with equal vigour wherever they occurred.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

24. While his delegation welcomed Namibia's accession to independence and the recent progress in the South African political process, it was concerned that racist and xenophobic outbursts were recurring in some other quarters. It sincerely hoped that new or old sources of regional tension would not replace the earlier East-West confrontation, thereby compromising any potential benefits that might be derived from the so-called "peace dividend", particularly those which could be channeled towards reactivating economic and social progress in the developing countries.

25. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions had yet to be exercised. The situation in the Middle East had been further aggravated by the crisis which had befallen Kuwait. A peaceful and just solution to the current Gulf crisis depended, first and foremost, on the prompt implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. Compliance with mandatory resolutions was a legal obligation of all States without exception. The way should be opened for a diplomatic settlement of the disputes dividing the countries of the region. A peaceful and just settlement effected through United Nations machinery and based on the relevant decisions of the Security Council would certainly enhance the authority and effectiveness of United Nations resolutions concerning the overall situation in the Middle East.

26. Miss FOSTIER (Belgium) said that her country attached particular importance to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). That was why, in conjunction with the other members of the Twelve, her country had appealed to countries that were in arrears with their contributions to honour their financial obligations immediately so that CERD could continue to peform its important functions. In that connection, she wished to explain that because of an administrative error by the Secretariat, there had been a slight delay in the payment of Belgium's assessed contribution, resulting in its inclusion on the list of countries which had not paid their contributions as of 30 September 1990. That situation had been rectified, demonstrating once again Belgium's adherence to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

27. Mr. RECHETOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, after more than four decades of cold war, the international community had renounced confrontation and was ready to work for peace, freedom, democracy and all universal human values. A new and better world was taking shape which shunned the use of force and drew inspiration from the moral code enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law. That process was sometimes a complicated and painful one and hampered by stereotypical attitudes such as racism and apartheid which, although totally alien to human nature, were deeply entrenched in the policies of some States. It was in order to combat those phenomena, which led to discord, posed a constant threat of national and regional conflict and undermined international peace and security, that the United Nations, a forum in which peoples were able to give voice to their aspirations and wishes, had drafted such documents as the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

(Mr. Rechetov, USSR)

28. His delegation had reviewed with interest the report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade (A/45/443) and also the report entitled "Study on the achievements made and obstacles encountered during the Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination" (A/45/525) prepared by the Special Rapporteur, Mr.Fide, which contained some very useful proposals. It welcomed the efforts of Mr. Martenson, Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights and Co-ordinator of the Second Decade, to fulfil his mandate.

29. In the months since the previous session of the General Assembly, there had been some major encouraging developments in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination. The most important had been the successful conclusion of the Namibia decolonization process in which a number of countries had worked together constructively and the United Nations had demonstrated its capacity and potential for international co-operation. The launching of a dialogue between the South African Government and the African National Congress (ANC) and the release of some anti-apartheid activists were also noteworthy. However, the recent wave of violence that had rocked South Africa showed that those gains were not irreversible. All parties to the dialogue must therefore show political restraint and work for a solution which took into account both the particular characteristics of the indigenous population and the right of the entire population to live in peace and security. The international community, for its part, must keep up the pressure on the Pretoria régime by imposing even broader sanctions than at present, in order to deprive the South African economy of the benefits to be gained from the policy of apartheid, and by pursuing a policy of systematic co-operation with the various groups which, in one way or another, were participating in the struggle against apartheid.

30. The determination of the United Nations to put an end to racism and racial discrimination was embodied in fundamental international instruments such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which in 1990 was celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of its adoption and the twenty-first anniversary of its entry into force and which had the greatest number of States parties - 129 - of any international human rights instrument. Nevertheless, States which had not yet done so should accede to the Convention so that it could become truly universal. Furthermore, as other delegations had requested, countries must pay their arrears in contributions to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) established under the Convention's provisions so that CERD could perform its important task.

31. The international struggle against racism should be accompanied by the incorporation of human rights instruments into national legislation in order to combat effectively cases of incitement to enmity and hatred among different ethnic groups such as had occurred in his country during the reform process of recent years. In that connection, he welcomed the global compilation of national legislation against racial discrimination prepared within the framework of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade and the drafting of model legislation to combat racial discrimination, proposed by Mr. Martenson in his statement.

(Mr. Rechetov, USSR)

32. The Second Decade would end in 1993. Work must therefore begin on formulating the programmes of activities for combating racism and racial discrimination that would have to be launched after that date so that mankind could enter the third millennium free from the scourge of racist ideologies and practices.

33. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that one of the most important missions of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights, was to promote respect for the right of each individual to equality and freedom without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. His Government believed that the protection of human rights must be a universal endeavour, undertaken by all nations regardless of size or political stance.

34. As a result of strenuous efforts by the United Nations to protect and promote human rights, more than 20 binding human rights instruments were currently in force. Regrettably, however, discriminatory and intolerant attitudes towards vulnerable persons and groups persisted in various parts of the world.

35. It was extremely regrettable that the General Assembly must yet again take up a problem as long-standing and deplorable as that of apartheid. There had been some signs of change, however. The initiatives taken by the South African Government since February 1990, which included the release of Mr. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and other anti-apartheid organizations and the lifting of the state of emergency in some parts of the country, and the decision taken by ANC to suspend its armed struggle, thereby helping to pave the way for negotiations on the drafting of a new Constitution, represented genuine progress towards the abolition of apartheid. Discriminatory laws and repressive regulations still existed, however. The Government of Japan would therefore continue to work to convince the Government of South Africa that they must be recinded as soon as possible. The Japanese Government hoped that a truly democratic régime, under which all people were guaranteed equal rights and fundamental freedoms, could be established in South Africa in the very near future.

36. Turning to the issue of self-determination, his delegation condemned the Iraqi invasion and annexation of Kuwait which, as a violation of one of the fundamental principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, had met with the unanimous condemnation of the international community and the application of unprecedented sanctions. Only the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and the recovery by Kuwait of its sovereignty and territorial integrity could pave the way for a peaceful solution of the problem. Japan had contributed to international efforts for the restoration of peace and stability in the region by providing materials, transportation and medical care in the Gulf area and $4 billion in financial support for the affected countries: Jordan, Turkey and Egypt.

37. The establishment of a lasting peace in Cambodia would depend ultimately on genuine national reconciliation of the Cambodian people and co-operation by all parties concerned. As an Asian nation itself, Japan had hosted the Tokyo meeting

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

on Cambodia. With the adoption of a framework for peace by the permanent members of the Security Council and with the agreement by the Cambodian parties concerned to accept that framework as a basis for future negotiations and to establish the Supreme National Council, the momentum for peace was building. He hoped that the Paris Conference would be convened without delay and that the remaining problems would be ironed out.

38. Japan had contributed $US 534,000 to the initial phase of the UNHCR repatriation programme for Cambodian refugees, which would commence after peace was restored. Thereafter, Japan would contribute its best efforts to United Nations peace-keeping operations and reconstruction activities.

39. Japan believed that political stability in Afghanistan would be attained only through the establishment of a broad-based coalition government. Japan had been assisting in the repatriation of refugees and had contributed to the Office of the Co-ordinator for United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes relating to Afghanistan.

40. The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination would end in 1993. During the two Decades, the Committee had played an indispensable role in combating racism and racial discrimination and had contributed significantly to the progress achieved. He hoped that every racist and racially discriminatory practice on earth would be eradicated well before the end of the Second Decade.

41. In conclusion, he wished to reaffirm that Japan would continue to extend co-operation and assistance to the international community in promoting human rights and the universal realization of the right to self-determination.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
5th meeting
held on
Thursday, 11 October 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 88: ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO THE RACIST AND COLONIALIST REGIME OF SOUTH AFRICA (continued) (A/45/552)

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AGENDA ITEM 98: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (A/45/3, chap. III, sect. A; A/45/174; A/45/443; A/45/525)

AGENDA ITEM 103: IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND OF THE SPEEDY GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES FOR THE EFFECTIVE GUARANTEE AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (A/45/438; A/45/500)

1. Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand), referring to his country's concern for racism and racial discrimination, said that in 1990 New Zealand had re-evaluated its race relations on the basis of the Treaty of Waitangi entered into 150 years ago between representatives of the Maori Chiefs and the British Crown. The Treaty constituted the foundation of New Zealand as a modern State and provided the parameters in which two peoples could live together in one country. During the period since the signing of the Treaty, promises had been broken, and wrongs committed which had to be redressed. The Government of New Zealand was committed to building a true and lasting partnership between its peoples. It was also conserned that its systems of government should respond in a more determined and positive way to the needs, aspirations and interests of the country's indigenous people. The Ministry of Maori Affairs monitored and advised the Government on the responsiveness of government agencies in that respect and, in addition, recognition was granted to Maori tribes, or iwi, as legicimate local authorities for controlling and delivering government services to the Maori people. It was by means of that new system that the Government empowered the Maori people. The economic, social and political status of Maori must improve, and their participation in the design and delivery of government programmes must lead to the achievement of that objective.

2. By setting out the principles of government action in dealing with issues arising from the application of the Treaty of Waitangi and by outlining the parameters of government, self-management, equality, co-operation and redress, the Government of New Zealand showed that all New Zealanders were bound by the Treaty. While it attended to those domestic concerns, New Zealand did not lose sight of the incidents of racial discrimination which occurred in other parts of the world, especially in South Africa, where the odious system of apartheid was particularly intolerable. New Zealand rejected apartheid and all it stood for and, in spite of the important changes recorded in the past nine months, could not believe that those changes were irreversible unless confirmation to that effect was received from those who suffered under apartheid. New Zealand believed that sanctions and

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

other measures against South Africa should continue to be applied and would go on supporting United Nations activities aimed at ending apartheid.

3. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had a central role to play in the fight against racism, and his delegation wished to express its full support of the Committee. The failure of some States parties to pay their assessed contributions with the result that the Committee had lacked sufficient resources was a disgrace. New Zealand supported proposals that temporary allocations should be made from the regular budget and that a contingency reserve fund should be established. The work of the Committee was of the utmost importance, and its interruption could not be allowed.

4. Turning to the principle of self-determination, he said it remained a cornerstone of the United Nations and that in that respect the creation of the independent State of Namibia had been a significant milestone during the year now under way. New Zealand was also gratified that the Government of France continued to abide by the commitment it had made in 1988 with regard to self-determination in New Caledonia. A genuine act of self-determination must presuppose the possibility of New Caledonia's achieving full independence or of its choosing other options. The process was under way, and the rights of all New Caledonians, particularly the indigenous Kanak people, must continue to be respected. Nation building was an ongoing process in other territories in the Pacific Island region, and New Zealand sought to play a constructive, supportive role in that connection.

5. New Zealand welcomed the progress achieved in the quest for a comprehensive settlement in Cambodia. In the continuing effort to create conditions suitable for the holding of fair and democratic elections, New Zealand was willing, if asked, to participate in international control arrangements in order to produce results which would benefit the Cambodian people.

6. The unwarranted aggression by Iraq against its small and peaceful neighbour, Kuwait, had shocked New Zealand, whose delegation supported and adhered firmly to the nine Security Council resolutions adopted so far. Iraq must withdraw, and Kuwait must be independent again.

7. Mr. LOEIS (Indonesia) said his delegation felt that the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the corresponding plans of activities remained the most effective vehicles for achieving the goals of the Decade - the elimination of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid. The efforts made in respect of their implementation needed to be intensified. The highest priority should be given to measures for combating apartheid, which was the most virulent and threatening form of racial discrimination.

8. His delegation stressed the need to continue implementing the plans of activities even though the schedule for their implementation may have expired. The activities for the current biennium (1990-1991) should commence, and activities pending from the period 1985-1989 should be implemented as well, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/52.

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

9. The delegation of Indonesia welcomed the Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade (A/45/443). In that report attention was drawn to activities for the Second Decade which the United Nations was currently implementing and to the efforts made to co-ordinate them. Indonesia would try to work in close co-operation with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in co-ordinating the issue of racial discrimination and with regard to the broad spectrum of human rights questions brought before the Committee by the Director of the Centre in his introductory statement.

10. Indonesia also welcomed the Note by the Secretary-General in document A/45/525, in which he transmitted the report entitled "A study on the achievements made and obstacles encountered during the Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination". Indonesia felt that the education of young people and of society was crucial to the success of the Decades and the ultimate elimination of racial discrimination. In Indonesia, such education was embodied in the teaching of the five principles of Pancasila. The application of the national philosophy of Pancasila, which attached importance to tolerance and respect of ethnic origin and religious convictions, had helped to achieve unity and diversity in Indonesia. Stress should also be laid on the importance of the use of the mass media as a tool of education to combat racist attitudes.

11. After noting the importance of the independence of Namibia and of the achievement of some progress with regard to the situation in South Africa, he reiterated his country's support of the anti-apartheid movement and pointed out that the international community should not and could not expect significant change and an end to apartheid to come about unless pressure continued to be applied. Sanctions needed to be continued until apartheid had been abolished since the basic structure of apartheid had not changed and the people of South Africa were still suffering the consequences.

12. It was a cause of grave concern and deep regret that, three decades after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Palestinian people were still denied their right to self-determination. The peace process in the Middle East had effectively come to a halt, and unarmed Palestinians were daily sacrificing their lives in pursuit of the freedom provided under that Declaration. As long as that situation persisted, peace would not be achieved, and the prolonged suffering experienced in that region would continue.

13. Mrs. DA SILVA SUNIAGA Venezuela) said that, in accordance with the provisions of its Constitution, Venezuela rejected all manifestations of racism and racial discrimination. It was therefore regrettable that, in spite of the untiring work of the United Nations and the international community, the objectives of the Second Decade had not been achieved and millions of human beings continued to be victims of that evil.

14. The independence of Namibia, which was the culmination of the persistent work of the Organization for a just cause, made it necessary, furthermore, to eradicate totally and definitively the apartheid régime, which had been set up precisely by

(Mrs. Da Silva Suniaga, Venezuela)

the State that for so many years had illegally occupied Namibia. To achieve that, and in spite of the political climate which seemed to prevail at the current time in South Africa, sanctions must be maintained until the system of racial discrimination was definitively eliminated.

15. Her delegation fully supported resolution 1990/1 adopted by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities at its forty-second session, on "Further measures to combat racism and racial discrimination and the role of the Sub-Commission", which recommended the launching of a third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. She also recognized the need for more effective co-ordination between the Centre for Human Rights and operational activities for development and the importance of measures to strengthen the participation of vulnerable groups in national economic, social and political life. Venezuela also supported the proposal that the Secretary-General, at the forty-third session of the Sub-Commission, should organize a joint meeting for one day with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in order to consider ways to respond to urgent situations involving racism or racial discrimination, in any part of the world, and to prepare an outline of possible activities for increasing the effectiveness of United Nations action in that regard.

16. With regard to co-ordinating activities of the Second Decade, she felt that the idea of holding periodic consultation meetings between the various bodies of the United Nations system was very sound and supported the plan of activities for the biennium 1991-1992.

17. Her delegation was grateful for the publication of the report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Eide, entitled "Study on the achievements made and obstacles encountered during the Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination", which contained very complete information, and supported the recommendations concerning co-ordinated measures to be taken by the United Nations in order to carry out the various programmes recommended in the Decades.

18. She noted with satisfaction that there were already 129 States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which was the largest number of signatories of any legal instrument for the protection of human rights to date. Nevertheless, that auspicious figure stood in contrast to the fact that the Committee, owing to non-payment of contributions, had not had sufficient resources to hold its spring session in 1990. She therefore appealed to Member States to make their contributions on time and thus enable the Committee to carry out its important work.

19. Her Government, as it had stated in the reply concerning General Assembly resolution 44/79 (A/45/500), and in accordance with the principles laid down in the preamble to the Venezuelan Constitution, attached great importance to the universal achievement of the right of peoples to self-determination and hoped that the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples would help bring about a world free of colonialism before the year 2000.

20. Mr. PULZ (Czechoslovakia) said that racism and racial discrimination continued to be a serious problem in the present-day world. Although theories on racial superiority were totally discredited, many manifestations of racial intolerance still occurred. As was pointed out in resolution 1990/49 of the Economic and Social Council, the objectives of the two Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had not yet been attained, despite the efforts of the international community. The most important such measures included the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which, with its 129 States Parties, was the most widely recognized international legal instrument in the field of human rights, and the collection and evaluation by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of information on the experience of States in implementing the Convention.

21. The agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the Committee, held the previous August, included the consideration of the tenth report of Czechoslovakia on the implementation of the Convention in its territory, on which the members of the Committee had made valuable suggestions that his Government would take into account in order to meet its obligations under the Convention. His delegation found it necessary to voice again its concern at the adverse effect of failure to pay contributions on the work of the Committee and, for that reason, supported the establishment of a contingency reserve fund, as recommended in resolution 1990/25 of the Commission on Human Rights. His delegation was also concerned about the failure of some States parties, which had not submitted reports or had delayed in submitting them, to fulfil their obligation under article 9 of the Convention. Furthermore, Czechoslovakia believed that it would help increase the effectiveness of the Committee's work if there were broader exchanges of information and experience between the Committee and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, without in any way impairing the complete independence of the Committee as a body of experts. Lastly, his delegation supported the Committee's recommendation that a meeting between the two bodies should be held in August 1991 to consider the important issues referred to in paragraph 31 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/45/443).

22. The apartheid system in South Africa, which was the last vestige of open racism, still constituted a violation of the human rights philosophy embraced by the United Nations and the entire international community; for that reason, the efforts to eradicate apartheid must continue until a united, democratic and non-racial society was established in that country. At the current time, after certain positive steps taken by the Government of President de Klerk, there were conditions for bringing about a speedy and peaceful dismantling of apartheid since the ruling circles in South Africa had understood the need to conduct a continuous dialogue with all opponents of apartheid in the country.

23. Czechoslovak society was not immune to manifestations of racism and racial discrimination either. In spite of what previous representatives of his country had said, the causes of those occurrences had not been eliminated. Since the revolution that had taken place the previous November and the fall of the totalitarian régime, his Government, with its new approach to the implementation of human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all citizens and its belief that racism and racial discrimination were among the most serious violations of human

(Mr. Pulz, Czechoslovakia)

rights in the contemporary world, acknowledged that problems existed and was seeking ways to settle them through information and educational activities.

24. Relations between members of various national or ethnic groups constituted one of the most acute and serious problems of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that had set out on the path of democracy; and Czechoslovakia, where several incidents involving racial intolerance with regard to members of the Romany ethnic group and Vietnamese workers had been reported, was no exception. The State authorities and broad circles of the Czechoslovak public had condemned those regrettable occurrences, which were dealt with in accordance with Czechoslovak penal law. The Government of Czechoslovakia, which expected the draft declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities to be finalized as soon as possible and hoped that it would be approved by the Commission on Human Rights at its next session, would make the declaration under article 14 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in the near future.

25. The objectives set for the First Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination were still relevant at the current time and, for that reason, his delegation supported the conclusion of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities that there was a need for the proclamation of a third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, which would make it possible to ensure better co-ordination and intensify international efforts to combat the continuing evil of racism and racial discrimination.

26. Ms. SHERMAN-PETER (Bahamas) said that the victims of human rights violations predicated on race numbered in the millions and that, judging by reports of interracial strife world wide, the situation might be further deteriorating.

27. The elimination of racism and racial discrimination was a fundamental issue for the United Nations, which had given highest priority to the activities of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, a priority objective of which was the abolition of the South African Government's abhorrent policy of apartheid. The prospects had never been more promising, given the abolition of a racist régime in Namibia and the adoption of certain positive measures by President de Klerk. However, the pillars of apartheid remained intact, as indicated by the current tribal divisiveness and strife, and the Government of the Bahamas therefore held that sanctions must continue to be an essential component of international pressure to bring about the end of apartheid.

28. The report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Eide, on the results achieved and the obstacles encountered during the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination indicated that, while some of the goals of the Decade had been partially achieved, much remained to be done to meet all of its objectives. Her delegation therefore welcomed the implementation of various aspects of the Programme of Action, including those carried forward by the Co-ordinator, and reiterated its support for those elements of the plan of activities which remained valid: inter alia, the regional workshops on the adoption of legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination, the preparation of model legislation and of

(Ms. Sherman-Peter, Bahamas)

teaching materials to combat racism and racial discrimination, and activities undertaken in the context of the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights. The conclusions of the seminar to be held that month in Geneva on political, historical, economic, social and cultural factors contributing to racism, racial discrimination and apartheid should prove useful, as should the meeting of representatives of national institutions and organizations promoting tolerance and harmony and combating racism and racial discrimination, contemplated for 1991.

29. International human rights instruments, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the instrument with the most States parties, and the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, were indispensable tools for ending racism and apartheid. For that reason, her delegation regretted that after five years of difficulties, no means of financing had been agreed upon for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the body responsible for overseeing the application of the Convention, while the regular cancellations of the Committee's spring sessions could be perceived as a serious deficiency in the application of treaties on human rights. Furthermore, due to the cancellation of the spring session that was to have been held in New York to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Committee, a valuable opportunity to increase public awareness of the Committee's work had been lost. However, her delegation was heartened by the efficacy of new procedures adopted by the Committee to address its other distinct problem: the review of its backlog of reports.

30. At a time when the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had been observed, and when Namibia had gained its independence, the Government of the Bahamas believed that the right to self-determination must not be subordinated to any interest, and it reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, as well as Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders.

31. The Government of the Bahamas, aware that the abrogation of fundamental human rights was detrimental not only to racial harmony, but also to the goals of society as a whole, had included adequate safeguards against discrimination in its Constitution, was encouraging the activities of human rights groups and had instituted broad programmes of civic and public education to foster racial harmony. The strategy was yielding results, since no case alleging racial discrimination had ever been brought before the Supreme Court.

32. Mr. BURCUOGLU (Turkey) said that Turkey, which had been a founding member and Vice-President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, welcomed the independence of Namibia and its admission to the United Nations as developments that could be credited to the efforts of the international community and of the Organization. Namibia's independence and the positive developments initiated in South Africa with the release of Mr. Mandela and progress towards the elimination of apartheid offered the prospect of a promising future for southern Africa. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, it was not unrealistic to foresee, in the relatively near future, the institution of a racially neutral democracy in South

(Mr. Burcuoglu, Turkey)

Africa. However, the international community should not relax its vigilance. Acts of violence had caused hundreds of deaths in South Africa, and the Turkish delegation hoped that all of the parties involved would do their utmost to stop such acts and to promote moderation and dialogue.

33. In an unprecedented action, one member of the United Nations had invaded and annexed the territory of another. The Iraqi aggression against Kuwait was further aggravating the already delicate situation in that region, which was close to Turkey. Turkey supported and was implementing the Security Council's resolutions and, despite many alarming signals, remained confident that the crisis could be resolved without resorting to armed conflict.

34. Turkey's position on the question of Palestine, the centre of the dispute in the Middle East, was well known. The uprising in the West Bank and in Gaza was a direct result of the frustration of the Palestinian people. The Palestinians should not tarnish their reputation by committing what could be considered terrorist acts; and the Israelis, for their part, should soften their intransigent position so that the peace process could continue. His delegation expressed its deep concern about the bloody acts which the indiscriminate use of force by Israeli authorities had caused in Jerusalem.

35. He was also concerned about the situation in Afghanistan, where the establishment of a government representative of all levels of society remained the essential component of a lasting solution. With respect to Cambodia, he welcomed the agreement reached by the five permanent Members of the Security Council on a frame of reference for a global political solution, the acceptance of that frame of reference by the Cambodian parties and their decision to constitute a Supreme National Council. Turkey would support activities carried out under the auspices of the United Nations to help re-establish the democratic process in Cambodia.

36. Mr. JIN Yongjian (China) said that in 1989, mankind had made gratifying progress in the struggle against racism. The independence won by the Namibian people was an outstanding example of that fact, and a great encouragement to the masses of black people in South Africa still fighting against apartheid. In South Africa there were encouraging signs. The racist régime had lifted its ban on the African National Congress and had released Mr. Nelson Mandela and other black leaders after many years in prison. Dialogue between the South African régime and leaders of the black movement had started.

37. However, it had to be pointed out that it was only due to domestic and external pressures that the régime had started to make such gestures. The South African racist régime had neither given up the apartheid system nor fundamentally changed its policy of racial discrimination. It continued to exclude the black people from general elections, to repress them and to massacre them when they demonstrated. South Africa had not made a positive response to the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted at the special session of the General Assembly the previous year (resolution S-16/1), which had established basic principles and programmes of action for the settlement of the question of South Africa. The struggle against racist minority rule in

(Mr. Jin Yongjian, China)

South Africa was far from being successful and had entered into a critical period. Therefore, the international community should not relax its efforts to apply sanctions against South Africa and should continue to support the South African people in their fight against racism and apartheid. China called on the South African régime to implement the Declaration fully, with a view to achieving an early settlement.

38. The United Nations had formulated a series of declarations and international conventions against racism and apartheid, of which two major ones were the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. A growing number of countries had acceded to or ratified those two conventions, and China called on those which had not done so, particularly countries with jurisdiction over transnational corporations operating in South Africa, to become signatory States. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the first of them was an auspicious moment for a publicity campaign aimed at attaining a more effective implementation of the Conventions on a broader basis.

39. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, composed of people enjoying high prestige and respect, had for many years performed its task of monotiring the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Its success was due mainly to its observance of two important principles: to work within the scope authorized by the Convention itself and to try to act at all times in a fair and unbiased manner. China hoped that the Committee would continue to follow those principles in its work.

40. China was a unified, multi-national country composed of 56 nationalities. Through their own experience, having suffered years of tribulations due to national repression and racial discrimination, the Chinese people of various nationalities had come to a profound understanding of the importance of ethnic equality and unity. Since the founding of New China in 1949, the Chinese people had genuinely enjoyed the right to national equality. China had always pursued a policy of equality among all nationalities; protected the freedom of religious belief, traditions and customs; promoted the development of the various languages; forbidden ethnic discrimination and repudiated any attempt to humiliate minority nationalities. Over the past 40 years China had adopted a series of laws and other measures to give practical help to the various ethnic groups in their economic and cultural development, had progressively eliminated inequalities among the various nationalities and had made remarkable progress in terms of national unity and shared prosperity.

41. In international affairs, China had always firmly opposed the policy of apartheid and racial discrimination, and had consistently supported the South African people in their struggle for racial equality. In conformity with that position, in 1982 China had acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1982, had strictly implemented all the obligations contained in it and had submitted four reports on its implementation, as the Convention itself provided.

(Mr. Jin Yongjian, China)

42. One of the purposes of the United Nations, enshrined in its Charter, was to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination. History showed the importance of the right of national self-determination in combating colonial rule, in enhancing national liberation movements and in gaining national independence. That right, too, played a major part in the fate of nations and countries subject to aggression and oppression. The right to self-determination had always been a major concern of the United Nations and had remained a focal point in its activities on human rights. With its work centred on that important issue, the Third Committee over the years had adopted a series of resolutions that had made a positive contribution to the struggle for national liberation, independence and self-determination.

43. China was glad to note that with the support of the African people and the entire international community, and through a protracted struggle, Namibia had finally won its independence. Recently, gratifying progress had been made in the efforts to seek a political solution to the Cambodian question. China hoped to see the prompt implementation of Security Council resolution 668 (1990) and of the basic documents agreed by the five permanent members of the Security Council, the early convocation of the Paris Conference, and the early realization of a fair, reasonable and comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian question, including the restoration of the Cambodian people's right to self-determination.

44. Everyone was disturbed by Israel's continuous gross violation of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. The current situation in the occupied territories continued to be confused and turbulent. The Israeli occupying authorities had stepped up their repression of the Palestinian residents and committed more atrocities against them, such as the recent massacre of more than 20 Palestinians in Jerusalem. China, which had always supported and sympathized with the Palestinian people in their sufferings, hoped that the international community and the parties involved would spare no effort to find an early, comprehensive and fair settlement to the Middle East question.

45. The world had been shocked by the recent armed invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, in flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and of accepted norms of international relations. The Security Council had adopted nine resolutions concerning that situation, and they had to be implemented as a matter of the utmost urgency. China hoped that Iraq would accede to the will of the international community and immediately withdraw its troops, with a view to restoring Kuwaiti independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and achieving a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.